GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LAW , JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2892
ANSWERED ON:15.03.2001
ELECTORAL REFORMS
ANANTRAO GUDHE

Will the Minister of LAW , JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken/propose to take fresh initiatives in consultation with political parties on contentious issues relating to electoral reforms;

(b) if so, the details of agenda discussed in the meetings and decisions arrived at; and

(c) the present status of electoral reforms?

Answer

MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE & COMPANY AFFAIRS AND SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY)

(a) to (c) The Government is continuously exploring ways and means of bringing about reforms in electoral laws. In this connection, it may be stated that the Government has before it the recommendations made by different bodies/individuals like the Dinesh Goswami Committee, the Indrajit Gupta Committee, the Election Commission of India, the Law Commission of India, etc. and various proposals based on their recommendations are required to be discussed with the political parties at an appropriate time and concretized. In this connection, the Government has also held a meeting with political parties on 13.5.2000 on the subject of fresh delimitation of electoral constituencies, in view of the fact that the existing constitutional embargo in this regard is going to expire with the publication of the figures of the current decennial population census, and certain other allied issues. Based on the consensus arrived at among the political parties in that meeting, the Government has introduced the Constitution (Ninety-first Amendment) Bill, 2000 in the LokSabha on 27.11.2000 seeking to extend the constitutional embargo on undertaking readjustment of electoral constituencies up to the year 2026 as also rationalization of the constituencies, including those reserved for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, based on the population census for the year 1991, without altering the number of seats allocated to States in the legislative bodies. The process of reform of electoral laws is, however, a continuous and ongoing process and can be carried out only through consensus among political parties, which is a time consuming process and, therefore, no time frame can be suggested in this regard. The Government, however, intends to continue interaction with the political parties on various proposals to carry forward the process of electoral reforms.